

# State of the art fitness center to open in 33 Area

Story and photos by  
Cpl. Zachary J. Nola

**CAMP PENDLETON, Calif** – Gym rats, muscle heads, and devil dogs simply wishing to stay slim and trim will soon say farewell to the current Area 33 Fitness Center and welcome a brand new facility here at Camp Margarita.

“It’s a 25,000 square foot building,” said Jim Vieira, 44, the project superintendent for Soltek Pacific Construction from Imperial Beach, Calif. “This building houses a full basketball court, four side courts, two racquetball courts, a multi-purpose room, an aerobics room, and a full weight room.”

The new building also provides air conditioning, new appliances and more workout room that the current building, which once housed the camp’s mess hall, cannot.

“Our new fitness center has things that this old fitness center doesn’t have, like individual men’s and women’s saunas as well as bigger locker rooms and better showers,” said Nina Killion, the manager of the 33 Area Fitness Center, from Oceanside, Calif. “We will also have a functional fitness room so people can do different things like kettle bells and throwing medicine balls.”

No schedule has been made but it is a goal of Marine Corps Community Service’s Semper Fit Program to use the building’s larger size to host more wellness classes.

“We’re really hoping that at the new fitness center we’ll be able to have more spinning classes and other mind-



Camp Margarita’s new fitness center features two professional size racquetball courts. Opening of the new 25,000 square foot fitness center is slated for July 10 with a ribbon cutting ceremony July 22.

body classes like yoga and meditation and maybe a basic kick boxing or abs class,” said Killion.

In addition to being larger and more up-to-date than the current building, the new structure is also designed to

be energy- and cost-efficient.

The new center incorporates a gray water recovery system that allows the gym to use recycled waste water to irrigate the facility’s landscape.

Another cost-saving feature includes a

system on the building’s roof that harnesses the sun’s energy to help power the building.

“We’re grabbing the sun’s energy and

**GYM Page 3**

## Marine fine tunes discipline

Story and photos by  
Pfc. Jeremy Fasci

**CAMP PENDLETON, Calif.** – For one Division Marine the discipline taught to him during boot camp was simply a refresher. As a cello player for his high school orchestra, Sgt. Eric Martinez learned an enormous amount of discipline while he was still in school.

Marines are well-known for being overachievers, often before enlisting as well as after, but it is a rare occasion to find someone who excelled at something that might not be regarded as popular.

“I initially wanted to play the trombone, but the position was filled, so they offered me the cello,” said Martinez, a career planner with the 1st Marine Division.

Playing the instrument helped Martinez fill his time and helped him build traits that he would later use in his Marine Corps career.

“I picked it up because I was bored,” said Martinez, 22, from Pomona, Calif. “Essentially, when you begin playing an instrument you get frustrated, and it taught me a measure of discipline to stick with things. The Marine Corps just fine tuned it.”

Learning to play any instrument can be difficult; it can become more of a challenge when the instrument is not popular and the musician doesn’t receive the support of his or her peers. That did not deter Martinez from the cello, though.

“It feels good knowing I can play something like this,” said Marti-

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Sergeant Eric Martinez, a career planner for the 1st Marine Division, is different than many other Marines because during his childhood he played the cello in an orchestra.

## Service members seek financial advice

Story by  
Cpl. Daniel Blatter

**CAMP PENDLETON, Calif** — The wise Marine is the individual who knows that one’s fiscal situation is important to monitor.

“Marines need to keep track of their finances because we don’t make a lot of money,” said Lance Cpl. Chad Pulliam, a photographer with the combat camera section, Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division.

“Most Marines think financial management (means) stretching their money until last call.”

In 2007, the Commandant of the Marine Corps signed an ALMAR message discussing his concerns for Marines financial management.

“I am concerned that many Marines are not taking full advantage of the financial planning opportunities available to them,” said Gen. James T. Conway, the commandant of the Marine Corps in the ALMAR.

For active component Marines, only 33 percent of enlisted and 44 percent of officers are currently enrolled in the thrift savings plan.”

These same concerns about Marines’ financial stability are still an issue today.

The Financial Management Program here offers many opportunities for 1st Marine Division leathernecks to improve their financial situations.

“We have lance corporals here who have (more than) \$100,000

**BUDGET Page 3**

## Train the Trainer course visits Margarita

Story and photo by  
Cpl. Daniel Blatter

**CAMP PENDLETON, Calif** — As 1st Marine Division leaders plan and prepare for future deployments, it’s important that all units understand the basics of building solid training plans as well as scheduling the plans properly.

The lead organization for the Infantry Train-the-Trainer (IT3) Pro-

gram, the Mobile Training Company, School of Infantry West, has been tasked with conducting instruction in the systems approach to training for unit leaders within the operational forces.

Marines are taught that a systems approach is a basic, yet standard way to organize and conduct operations utilizing a checklist, timelines and practical applications.

The MTC has provided Marine leaders with Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division, a week-long event to train the unit’s leadership on how to organize, plan, resource, support, and execute standards-based training.

The T3 training began June 22 with 21 Marines absorbing two days



Capt. Keith M. Montgomery, the officer-in-charge and lead instructor of the Infantry Train-the-Trainer program, shows Marines of Headquarters Battalion proper procedures for organizing and conducting operations. He also demonstrates the proper tact for critiquing a local map with fields of fire.

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# Division Training



## MP’s prepare for future deployments with convoy ops



Marines of Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division drive past Lance Cpl. Mark T. Redman, the training NCO for 2nd Platoon, as he catches the convoy by surprise with an “improvised explosive device” strapped to his body.

*Story and photo by  
Cpl. Daniel Blatter*

**CAMP PENDLETON, Calif.** – Marines often train for deployments by going on strenuous runs or hitting the gym, but some Marines go about it in a much more tactical way. Marines with Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division, spent numerous hours from June 22-26 preparing for future deployments through practical application and convoy operations. Every squad of every platoon from MP

Co. received a chance each day to show their convoy knowledge and hit the roads of 22-Area’s Range 401. The Marines were tested with numerous scenarios such as hidden improvised explosive devices, blocked ambushes, and casualty medical evacuations. Convoy operations are a common exercise in today’s warfare and an even more common exercise for MP Co. “Convoys are a very crucial task for us to know,” said Cpl. Charles C. Engblom, a section leader with 3rd Platoon, MP Co. “That’s our main mission when we get into country. Practicing day in and

day out is vital to get muscle memory so that way when a situation arises, Marines aren’t stumbling and fumbling around. They know what to do and they can act accordingly.” “We’re getting our Marines spun up so that way when we go into country we know what to do if situations arise.”

For many Marines, the scenarios they were placed in will soon become reality. The goal is for them to know every detail of every scenario so it won’t catch them by surprise. “What we are doing here helps when we get deployed,” said Lance Cpl. Rory S. King, a team leader with 3rd Plt. “It makes the younger Marines, and junior Marines that haven’t deployed before, more proficient in the jobs.”

In convoys, Marines will often find themselves in difficult scenarios that will test their skills. They have to learn to rely on their own knowledge as well as make difficult decisions. “It’s not a one man show out there,” said King, 19, from Kansas City, Kan. “If one truck goes down or one person doesn’t know what they are doing it affects everyone. It’s a team effort. If one person fails the whole team fails. The most important thing is that everyone knows their job and knows what they are supposed to do.” Marines from MP Co. displayed their knowledge by quickly spotting a majority of the threats during their training.

“The Marines here are doing outstanding,” said Engblom, 30, from Chicago, Ill. “They are responding well and they are responding quickly. They have been making judgment calls with the right decisions. Even with casualties and the “wounded” we did take, they moved on like nothing happened which you have to do in country.” Although the Marines of MP Co. are knowledgeable about conducting convoy operations today, they will be even more knowledgeable tomorrow.



Marines with Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division, spent numerous hours from June 22-26 preparing for future deployments through practical application and convoy operations.

## Artillery Training School trains arty section chiefs

*Story and photos by  
Cpl. Skyler Tooker*

**CAMP PENDLETON, Calif.** — The 11<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment Artillery Training School concluded a four-week Artillery Section Chief Course for the M-777A2 howitzer June 26. The course is designed for promising Marines from different batteries within 11<sup>th</sup> Marines to learn how to run an M-777 howitzer within a battery. “The course covers a wide range of things that a section chief needs to know in order to properly and safely operate a M-777 in a battery,” said Sgt. Tyler C. Wright, 25, with Battery F, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division, from Houston. “One of the main things the instructors stress a lot in the course is double checking everything and safety.” A few of the subjects the Marines have to cover are artillery ammunition, fire commands, safety and 2nd land navigation. The Marines had to take a practical application test at the end of the course. “Retaining all the information in the four-week course is important to be able to operate the M-777 safely and effectively,” said Sgt. Nicholas C. Johnsen, 24, with Battery A, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn.,

11<sup>th</sup> Marines, from Crivitz, Wis. “All the Marines have to take a practical application test, written test and safety test to become a qualified section chief in the 11<sup>th</sup> Marines.” The Marines are given a 329-page book that covers the entire course they must study, but they also have to conduct physical training three times a week. Not only do the Marines have to study for all the tests that are conducted in the last week of the course, but they have to complete the safety test with a score of 100 percent in order to become a certified 11<sup>th</sup> Marines artillery section chief, according to Sgt. Dustin R. Zimmerman, 22, an ATS senior instructor, from San Leandro, Calif. “I know that these Marines are getting the knowledge they need to know to operate the M-777 weapon system safely, said Zimmerman.

All the Marines in the section chief course seemed confident in stepping up and conducting a fire mission safely and correctly. “For section chiefs, the standards are a lot higher,” said Wright. “This

knowledge is good to know even if you are not the section chief, because you never know when the Marines in a battery might need to step up and conduct a fire mission.”



Marines with the Artillery Training School Section Chief Course conduct their practical application test in the final week of their course in order to make sure all the Marines have the knowledge to be a section chief.

For inquiries about attending a course at  
1st Marine Division Schools please call 725-8760





Sergeant Eric Martinez, a career planner for the 1st Marine Division, makes good use of the skills he learned while in the orchestra as a child. Martinez continues to play the cello in his spare time and intends to continue playing.

## Cello

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nez. “Most people play the guitar, which is common around the world, so this definitely sticks out.”

The effort that goes into keeping up with such a difficult musical talent produces a good work ethic to emulate.

“He puts the same effort into his work here as he does playing his cello,” said Staff Sgt. Adrian Serrano, 30, a career planner with the 1st Marine Division, from Knox, Texas. “It takes a lot to continue with an instrument that is not very popular but he thrives to improve his artistic abilities.”

Of the many different traits that

are instilled in Marines during their careers, confidence may be the most important because it has an effect not only on personal performance but leadership ability, as well.

“(Playing the cello) definitely made me a little more confident,” said Martinez. “(There is) this thing in the music world ... called sight reading, where you play a piece of music, after seeing it [one] time, with the utmost confidence you have.”

While playing from the sixth grade until graduating from high school, Martinez found himself wanting something else.

“Playing the cello was ok, but my interest with it had already peaked. It intrigued me, but it

wasn’t anything I wanted to carry or pursue outside of school,” said Martinez. “(But) after a while it grows on you. It’s something about engrossing yourself into something; most people work on cars or other things as a stress releaser. I don’t play every day, but when I do it’s definitely a stress releaser.”

Still, Martinez knew he wanted to pursue the military as a career, as opposed to pursuing music as a profession.

When he made the decision, no other branch would have fulfilled what Martinez wanted to do by joining the military.

“The armed forces is the Marine Corps, and nothing else comes close,” said Martinez.

## Gym

cont. from Page 1

actually putting energy back into the building,” said Vieira. “It saves five percent of the energy a day that goes into the building.”

The building’s gymnasium features air ducts made from 100 percent recycled material that help distribute air flow. When combined with the gymnasium’s large fans, the new ducts will help keep energy costs low.

“It helps evenly distribute the air which is very efficient,” said Marcos Bacing, 29, the managing foreman for Davis Mechanical Systems, from San Diego. “You add in the fans and it helps with ventilation and energy costs.”

Contractors broke ground for the new structure on June 5, 2008 and completion is scheduled for July 10, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony July 22.

“I’m excited for the people in the camp,” said Killion. “I think it’s going to be very nice. I think that it will be the jewel in the crown right here at Camp Margarita.”

Operating hours for the new gym will be 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekends.



The multi-purpose room in the new 33 Area gym will have space for many different fitness classes such as aerobics and spin classes. Camp Margarita’s new 25,000 square foot fitness center is slated to open July 10 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony July 22.

## Budget

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in their bank accounts,” said Beth Middleton, personal financial management specialist.

“But we also have gunnery sergeants and master sergeants who live paycheck to paycheck.”

Middleton addressed Marines of Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division June 19 during a New Join Briefing at the chapel, one of the many opportunities she has to give advice to service members about their financial stability.

She spoke about the steady paycheck they receive and how it provides the perfect opportunity to create a budget and save.

“I came home from deployment with extra cash,” said Pulliam, 20, from Lincoln, Calif. “The financial management program informed me about the opportunities I had to save and invest that money.”

Not every Marine has extra deployment money on hand.

“Go to the Wendy’s on base on a payday and the line is out the door and around the corner,” said Middleton during the brief. The base Financial Management Program advertises that they offer individual, group and unit training.

They focus on financial education, consumer awareness, credit information and investments.

“The benefits of early and long-term financial planning and investing can be substantial to a Marine over the course of their career and life,” said Conway. “Developing healthy spending and investing habits early in a career can help Marines reach their personal and professional goals.”

For additional information or to set up an appointment, contact Middleton or Gerald Williams at the Financial Management Program 725-9790 or 725-6098.

## T3

cont. from Page 1

of classroom instruction. The instruction focused mainly on unit training management. Following the classroom instruction, the course moved to live-range 703 from June 24 to 26, where the MTC conducted multiple basic training exercises to instruct and demonstrate the systems approach to training.

“All we are really doing is getting back to the basics and showing Marines how to lead,” said Capt. Keith M. Montgomery, the officer-in-charge and lead instructor of the MTC. “We teach a way to train using a systems approach to training and unit training management.”

“The Marine Corps, in essence, has gotten away from the basics, due to a lot of time constraints in between deployments,” said Montgomery, 35, from Lake Arrowhead, Calif. “So what we do is, we go around to units and get them back into the basics. Mainly, we are showing them a way to train.”

This is the second time HQ Bn., the only non-infantry unit to receive this type of training, has participated in the T3 program, as military police company was the first to receive it just weeks ago.

“It’s our job to keep our Marines engaged at all times,” said Gunnery Sgt. John M Austin, the staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge of the MTC. “You want to maximize your training time, because we don’t always have that extra time.”

“Marines make our job,” said Austin, 30, from Houston. “It’s our job as leaders to make sure they have the best quality training.”

The goal of this training was to provide Marines with a proper foundation in the systems approach.

“You have to approach each training event knowing what your unit or audience is capable of,” said Staff Sgt. Trevor L. Goff, 27, a platoon sergeant with Truck Co. A., HQ Bn., from Kalamazoo, Mich. “The main goal is to set our Marines up for success.”

Throughout the class, Marines are forced to think outside the box when building solid training plans, presenting their plans, and then critiqued to clear up all the discrepancies.

“We show Marines the importance of standard-based training while utilizing checklists to make sure they are meeting those standards,” said Montgomery. “We also demonstrate concurrent training, so they get the most out of their training time.”

Upon completion of IT3 training, the training unit will have three weeks to plan and coordinate a tactical small unit leader’s course.

“This is the leadership of Headquarters Battalion, or future leadership,” said Montgomery. “What the Marines here need to do is take this process back to their unit and apply it so they can create future leaders of Marines.”

## Money Managers

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For More Information Contact the  
Personal Financial Management Specialist:  
**Beth Middleton, BA or Gerald A. Williams, MBA**

(760) 725-9790 or (760) 725-6098  
beth.middleton@usmc.mil  
gerald.williams@usmc.mil

## The Blue Diamond weekly newsletter is brought to you by:

1st MARDIV Commanding General  
Maj. Gen. Thomas D. Waldhauser  
1st MARDIV Assistant Commanding General  
Maj. Gen. Richard P. Mills  
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PAO Chief  
Sgt. M. Trent Lowry



# The Frontlines

## 2/7 Scout Snipers take a ‘little’ hike



First Lt. Andrew H. Melander, the Scout Sniper Platoon commander, Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, leads his Marines and sailor from Scout Sniper Platoon up the steep terrain of Mount San Jacinto near Palm Springs, Calif., during a conditioning hike June 12. They gained 10,500 feet in elevation while hiking 22 miles of trails in 12 hours and 40 minutes.

**Story and photos by  
Cpl. Corey A. Blodgett**

**MOUNT SAN JACINTO STATE PARK, PALM SPRINGS, Calif.** — “We’d be going that fast too if we had such small packs,” said a hiker with a full camping load on her back as eight men with military hair cuts and proper civilian attire passed her on the steep mountainside. “Oh, those are the guys who started hiking at three in the morning from the bottom,” said another man in her group. “Never mind,” she said. Seven Marines and a sailor from Scout Sniper Platoon, Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, passed a lot of hikers and weekend warriors June 12 on their way to San Jacinto Peak nearly 11,000 feet above Palm Springs, Calif., but the most important thing they passed was the wooden sign that told them



Marines and a sailor from Scout Sniper Platoon, Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, stride through the second half of their climb to San Jacinto Peak nearly 11,000 feet above Palm Springs, Calif., June 12, after already hiking 11 miles up the steep mountain terrain for more than eight hours.

they had reached the top. After more than 10 hours into the hike, Sgt. Matthew C. Walker, a team leader with Scout Sniper Platoon, said it was pretty much the only thing on his mind. “In my head I just kept thinking, ‘can I make it up to the summit?’ he said. “That is why we did this, more of a mental challenge than anything. So everyone would learn that if you keep pushing yourself you can just keep going and forget how you feel. Learn that your body can actually take a lot more than you think it can.” Mount San Jacinto is famous for the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, which lifts thousands of tourists a year 8,516 feet to camping areas and trails throughout the state park. Unlike most hikers though, the Marines and sailor opted to start at the base of the mountain near the Palm Springs Art Museum, 16 miles from the summit. “All together, from the museum to the summit and then back down to the tram it took 12 hours and 40 minutes. We went 22 miles and gained 10,500 feet of elevation,” said 1st Lt. Andrew H. Melander, the Scout Sniper Platoon commander. “It was definitely challenging. My feet felt like ground beef after it, but I was amazed by some of the performances of the guys. There were a lot of guys you could tell were struggling, and they just kept going.” Everyone agreed on the high level of drive and endurance it took to finish. “That was probably the most grueling thing I’ve done,” said Lance Cpl. Jesse R. Lopez, a rifleman new to the platoon. “It was not what I expected beforehand, because as we were hiking up, we’d get to the top of one peak where I thought I could see the top,

but then they were like ‘no, we still have six more hours to go.’ “That was the point though,” he said. “What they wanted us to take away from that experience was to just have that ‘no-quit’ mentality, always be on top of our game and be ready to just tackle any challenge that comes our way.” Putting the men through the struggle and labor of the climb was an important aspect of the training, said Staff Sgt. Timothy R. Solum, the Scout Sniper Platoon staff noncommissioned officer in charge. “One of the things I learned early on in my career is that there is no better way to build camaraderie than being put through a shared, common suffering to accomplish big goals you can be proud of,” he said. Melander agreed, saying after awhile, they would know all the pain would be worth it. “I’m sure they were hurting quite a bit, but I know they got a lot out of it afterwards,” Melander said. “They’re going to drive down to Palm Springs now, see those peaks and know they conquered that mountain.” Solum said he could tell the guys were “beat” after the climb, but he also saw that they built a solid connection with each other, by overcoming obstacles few have overcome. “The hike was an excellent way to bring everyone together,” Solum said. “It was challenging and no one was looking forward to it because it was going to suck, and it did. But at the same time, even when it was sucking, the guys knew they were accomplishing something they could be proud of.” “This is probably something none of them have ever done in their lives

before; most of them have probably never climbed a mountain,” he said. “Most of them probably never went 22 miles with a pack.”



Lance Cpls. Tyler Hutchings (foreground), Michael Brown and Jesse Lopez all with Scout Sniper Platoon, Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, push through a conditioning hike on Mount San Jacinto in Palm Springs, Calif., that eventually lead them 22 miles in 12 hours and 40 minutes, with an elevation gain of nearly 10,500 feet.



# Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen opens big



Optimus Prime shows off his twin blades as he prepares to do battle with Decepticon robots in the blockbuster movie Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen, which opened June 24.

Story by  
Cpl. Paul M. Torres

Audiences flocked to theatres Weds., June 24 to see “Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen.” By the end of the opening weekend, the sequel to the 2007 hit film grossed \$201.2 million. Despite almost topping The Dark Knight’s \$203.8 million, which featured brilliant performances, don’t expect an Oscar nomination for “Transformers” any time soon.

“Revenge of the Fallen” easily falls into the category of sequels that weren’t as good as the original, but still worth every penny at the box office. Michael Bay delivers exactly what summer audiences have grown to expect from Hollywood: explosions, cheesy dialogue and eye-popping special effects.

The scenes where two robots fighting was just a mass of metal and sound effects are gone. Whether it is Optimus Prime beating the lubricants out of three robots at a time, or Bumblebee using moves that look like he has been taking notes from the Ultimate Fighter, the fight scenes are simply amazing and not to be missed on the big screen.

As expected Megan Fox and Shia LeBouf reprise their roles as Mikaela Barnes and Sam Witwicky, respectively, and here there are no surprises. LeBouf’s dialogue delivery harkens the memory of a younger Vince Vaughn and Megan Fox is hotter than magma. That being said, they still can’t act to save their lives, but again who cares, it’s Transform-

ers, not Shakespeare. While the movie is entertaining, it is far from perfect. Even though it was able to improve immensely on the robot fight scenes, the areas where the original Transformers was weak, the plot of “Revenge of the Fallen” is even worse.

A handful of new Decepticons and Autobots are introduced, but it seems most are there for comic relief. The writers never passed up the opportunity for a cheap joke no matter how juvenile. Whether it was twin robots spouting put-downs and the occasional dirty word or a leg-humping remote-controlled truck, the humor teetered on the verge of vulgar with enough innuendo to keep its PG-13 rating.

The plot leaves no room for any of the characters to develop past what we learned about them in the first movie, leaving the audience engaged in the action, but not caring about the characters. This is actually a good thing because it makes it easier to sit back and just accept that this is just all the extra stuff that has to happen in between the robot fights.

As if a predictable plot weren’t enough, the infamous Michael Bay spinning camera shot pops up one time too many to distract and dizzy the audience.

The best advice for enjoying the movie is to laugh at the bad puns, ignore the leaps of logic and the boring plot and the poorly directed ‘do you love me’ scenes, buy a big bag of popcorn and enjoy watching robots turn each other into scrap metal.



Bumblebee takes a swing at a Decepticon robot in Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen which opened June 24.

Music Mania

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BASE THEATRE  
MOVIES AND TIMES



The base theater is located in the Base Training Center, Building 1330 Vandegrift Blvd., in the 13 Area across from the Mainside Exchange.

Theater is closed Monday and Tuesday

	BEGINS	ENDS
<b>Wednesday, July 1</b> Star Trek (PG-13)	6:30 PM	8:27 PM
<b>Thursday, July 2</b> Angels and Demons (PG-13)	6:30 PM	8:48 PM
<b>Friday, July 3</b> Terminator (PG-13)	6:00 PM	7:55 PM
<b>Obsessed (PG-13)</b>	9:00 PM	10:48 PM
v		
<b>Saturday, July 4</b> Closed in recognition of Independence Day		
<b>Sunday, July 5</b> !!! FREE MOVIES !!! “See It Again Sunday!”		
<b>I Love You, Man (R)</b>	1:00 PM	2:45 PM
<b>Race to Witch Mountain (PG)</b>	4:00 PM	5:39 PM
<b>12 Rounds (PG-13)</b>	6:30 PM	8:18 PM

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Film start time: 6:30 PM  
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